Crop Conditions as of October 11, 2007

Cool, damp fall weather conditions, in conjunction with delayed crop maturity due to late seeding, have caused major harvest delays in many areas of the province. As well, the unsettled weather has resulted in significant deterioration in crop quality. Provincially, it is estimated that 85% of the crop is now in the bin, compared to 65% two weeks ago. In most years, crop harvest in the province is completed by the Thanksgiving weekend. Crops still in the field are mostly those that were either seeded late or damaged by hail. Estimates of harvest progress vary considerably across the province. Combining is virtually complete in the Southern and North East Regions. However, in the northern half of the Peace Region, many producers still have 60-70% of their crops in the field and may need three weeks to wrap up harvest for the year, depending on the weather.

By crop type, estimates of provincial harvest progress are: dry peas 97%, durum wheat 94%, spring wheat 88%, barley 86%, canola 79%, and oats 78% (see Table 1). Shown in Table 2 is the regional percentage of crops in swath. Combining of specialty crops grown on dryland is virtually complete, while the harvest of specialty crops grown under irrigation is currently underway. Overall, provincial yields this year are estimated to be similar to 10-year averages for dry peas, canola and spring cereals. With respect to fall seeded crops and most specialty crops under irrigation, yields are above average.

Due to cool, damp weather conditions, grains harvested in the last two weeks have been of lower quality. For grains already in the bin, quality overall is estimated to be average for spring cereals, but below average for canola. More specifically, about 70% of hard red spring wheat and 75% of durum wheat could be graded as No.1 and No.2, while about 18% of barley could be of malt quality. In the case of canola, about 75% of the crop could be graded as No.1. Cereals still in the field are likely to be taken off as feed grains.

The provincial yield for hay is estimated to be above average, due to high yields from the first cut, and quality is mostly rated as fair to excellent. Pasture conditions in the province are rated as 21% poor, 41% fair, 35% good, and 3% excellent. Also, some areas in the province have reported moderate to heavy weed infestations.

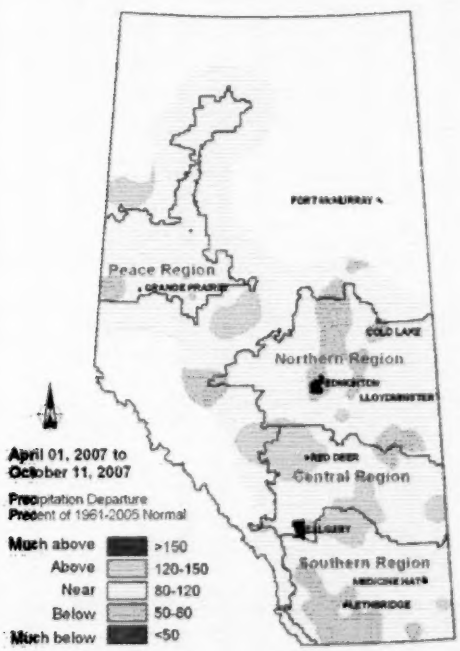

Table 1: Estimates of Crop Harvest Progress by Region

	South	Central	N. East	N. West	Peace	**Alberta**
Spring Wheat	95%	80%	96%	87%	66%	**88%**
Durum Wheat	96%	89%	95%	87%	66%	**94%**
Oats	94%	70%	94%	84%	53%	**78%**
Barley	97%	73%	94%	86%	63%	**86%**
Canola	96%	84%	97%	88%	36%	**79%**
Dry Peas	100%	98%	100%	100%	81%	**97%**
All Crops	**96%**	**78%**	**96%**	**87%**	**52%**	**85%**

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Food, Statistics and Data Development Unit

Table 2: Estimates of Percentage of Crops in Swath by Region

	South	Central	N. East	N. West	Peace	**Alberta**
Spring Wheat	3%	13%	4%	7%	10%	**6%**
Durum Wheat	2%	7%	5%	7%	10%	**3%**
Oats	4%	19%	5%	9%	15%	**11%**
Barley	2%	17%	4%	8%	17%	**8%**
Canola	3%	12%	3%	12%	62%	**20%**
Dry Peas	0%	1%	0%	0%	12%	**2%**
All Crops	**2%**	**14%**	**3%**	**9%**	**33%**	**10%**

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Food, Statistics and Data Development Unit

Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program.

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2007 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- With 96% of the crop in the bin, harvest for major crops is complete in most areas of the region. Lagging behind is the northwestern part of the region, where many producers still have 10-30% of their crops in the field. Harvest for most specialty crops grown on dryland is virtually complete. However, for specialty crops under irrigation, estimates of harvest completion are 88% for dry beans, 81% for potatoes and 22% for sugar beets.
- Crop yields vary considerably across the region. Overall, yields are estimated to be average to below average for major crops, but above average for most specialty crops grown under irrigation. Compared to other areas of the province, an earlier harvest has resulted in better quality grains in the region.
- Some producers are still working on third cut hay grown under irrigation. Pasture conditions are reported as 40% poor, 28% fair, 27% good, and 5% excellent.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- Harvest progress varies considerably across the region. Many producers in the western half of the region still have 30-40% of their crops in the field, while for areas along the Saskatchewan border, harvest has virtually wrapped up for the year. Overall, harvest is estimated at 78% complete in the region. Also, some grains are being taken off damp and tough, and need to be dried.
- In general, crop yields are estimated to be similar to the 10-year averages for spring cereals and canola, while crop quality is expected to be average.
- Pasture conditions are rated as 13% poor, 44% fair, 37% good, and 6% excellent.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- With 96% of crops in the bin, most producers in the region have wrapped up harvest for the year. Crops still in the field are mostly those that were either seeded late or damaged by hail. Yield estimates are average for spring cereals, but above average for canola. Also, the recent cool, damp conditions have resulted in some deterioration in crop quality.
- Some areas in the region have reported moderate to heavy weed infestations.
- Pasture conditions are rated as 16% poor, 53% fair, 30% good, and 1% excellent.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- With the recent warm, dry weather, harvest has been progressing rapidly and now stands at 87% complete in the region. Yields are below average for spring wheat, above average for oats, and average for barley and canola.
- With respect to crop quality, there are reports of some grade deterioration for grains combined in the last two weeks. Overall, grade estimates are average for spring cereals, but below average for canola. Crops still in the field are mostly those that were seeded late.
- Weed infestations are a concern to producers in some areas. Pasture conditions are reported as 31% poor, 35% fair, 32% good, and 2% excellent.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Harvest has progressed to 52% complete (from 28% two weeks ago), as producers try to get their crops off the field. Grains are mostly being taken off damp and tough, and need to be dried. Cool, damp fall weather conditions, sometimes accompanied by hail and heavy frost, have caused major harvest delays and resulted in significant deterioration in crop quality. In some areas, barley is sprouting in the swath. Warm, dry conditions are needed to allow harvest to progress, and reduce the green seed count in canola.
- Crop yields are estimated to be average to above average for spring cereals, canola, and dry peas. With respect to quality, grade estimates are below average for spring cereals and canola.
- Pasture conditions are reported as 5% poor, 43% fair, 50% good, and 2% excellent.

Alberta Agriculture and Food
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